Jean Craighead George

Jean Carolyn Craighead George (July 2, 1919 – May 15, 2012) was an American writer of more than one hundred books for children and young adults, including the Newbery Medal-winning *Julie of the Wolves* and Newbery runner-up *My Side of the Mountain*.[1] Common themes in George's works are the environment and the natural world. Beside children's fiction, she wrote at least two guides to cooking with wild foods and one autobiography published 30 years before her death, *Journey Inward*.

For her lifetime contribution as a children's writer she was U.S. nominee for the biennial, international Hans Christian Andersen Award in 1964.[3]

Jean Carolyn Craighead George	
Craighead George in Barrow, Alaska, 1994	
Born	July 2, 1919[1] Washington, D.C., U.S.
Died	May 15, 2012 (aged 92)[2] Valhalla, New York, U.S.
Occupation	Writer
Awards	Newbery Medal 1973

Biography

Jean Carolyn Craighead was born on July 2, 1919, in Washington DC. She was raised in a family of naturalists.[4] Her mother, father (Frank Craighead Sr.), brothers (Frank and John), aunts, and uncles were students of nature. On weekends they camped in the woods near Washington, climbed trees to study owls, gathered edible plants, and made fish hooks from twigs. Her first pet was a turkey vulture.[5] George centered her life around writing and nature.

George graduated in 1940 from Pennsylvania State University[6] with degrees in both English and science. In the 1940s she was a member of the White House Press Corps and a reporter for *The Washington Post*. From 1969 to 1982 she was a writer and editor at *Reader's Digest*. She married John Lothar George in 1944, and they divorced in 1963.[1] Her first novels were written in collaboration with him, and she provided the illustrations for them, done in black and white watercolors or inks. A later editor encouraged her to use other illustrators for her books.

Two of George's novels for children were *My Side of the Mountain*, a 1960 Newbery Medal runner-up,[7] and its 1990 sequel *On the Far Side of the Mountain*. In 1991, George became the first winner of the Knickerbocker Award for Juvenile Literature from the School Library Media Section of the New York Library Association, which was presented to her for the "consistent superior quality" of her literary works.[8]

The inspiration for *Julie of the Wolves* evolved from two specific events during a summer she spent studying wolves and tundra at the Arctic Research Laboratory of Barrow, Alaska. She explained, "One was a small girl walking the vast and lonesome tundra outside of Barrow; the other was a magnificent alpha male wolf, leader of a pack in Denali National Park. They haunted me for a year or more as did the words of one of the scientists at the lab: 'If there ever was any doubt in my mind that a man could live with the wolves, it is gone now. The wolves are truly gentlemen, highly social and affectionate.'"[9] George won the annual Newbery Medal from the American Library Association for *Julie*, recognizing the year's "most distinguished contribution to American literature for children".[7] She also won the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis in 1975 for its German-language edition *Julie von den Wölfen*, one of only two such double wins (with Scott O'Dell and *Island of the Blue Dolphins*).[10]

George was a mother of three and a grandmother. The 2009 Dutton Children's Books *Pocket Guide to the Outdoors* is credited to "Jean Craighead George; with Twig C. George, John C. George, and T. Luke George".[11] Daughter Twig C. George had previously written a few children's books about animals. Over the years, George kept one hundred and seventy-three pets, not including dogs and cats, in her home in Chappaqua, New York. "Most of these wild animals depart in autumn when the sun changes their behaviour and they feel the urge to migrate or go off alone. While they are with us, however, they become characters in my books, articles, and stories."[12]

Jean died on May 15, 2012, at the age of 92 from complications of congestive heart failure, according to Twig George, at the Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla.[2][13]

Works

- 1948 *Vulpes the Red Fox* (American Woodland Tales series, with husband John L. George, illustrated by Jean George)
- 1949 *Vison the Mink* (American Woodland Tales series, with John L. George, illustrated by Jean George)
- 1950 *Masked Prowler, The Story of a Raccoon* (American Woodland Tales series, with John L. George, illustrated by Jean George)
- 1952 *Meph, the Pet Skunk* (American Woodland Tales series, with John L. George, illustrated by Jean George)

- 1954 *Bubo, the Great Horned Owl* (American Woodland Tales series, with John L. George, illustrated by Jean George)
- 1956 *Dipper of Copper Creek* (American Woodland Tales series, with John L. George, illustrated by Jean George)
- 1957 *The Hole in the Tree* (as by Jean George, writer and illustrator)
- 1958 *Snow Tracks* (as by Jean George, writer and illustrator)
- 1959 *My Side of the Mountain* (Mountain series #1, as by Jean Craighead George, writer and illustrator) (ISBN 0-14-034810-7)
- 1962 *The Summer of the Falcon* (illustrated by George)
- 1963 *Red Robin, Fly Up!* (picture book, photos by Ellan Young)
- 1964 *Gull Number 737* (illustrated by George)
- 1964 *Marvels and Mysteries of Our Animal World* (Jean George editor and contributor)
- 1965 *Spring Comes to the Ocean* (illustrated by John Wilson)
- 1966 *Hold Zero!* (illustrated by George)
- 1967 *The Moon of the Owls* (The Thirteen Moons series #1, picture book illustrated by Jean Zallinger)
- 1967 *The Moon of the Bears* (The Thirteen Moons series #2, picture book illustrated by Mac Shepard)
- 1967 *The Moon of the Salamanders* (The Thirteen Moons series #3, picture book illustrated by John Kaufmann)
- 1967 *The Moon of the Monarch Butterflies* (The Thirteen Moons series #5, picture book illustrated by Murray Tinkelman)
- 1968 *The Moon of the Fox Pups* (The Thirteen Moons series #6, picture book illustrated by Kiyoaki Komoda)
- 1968 *The Moon of the Wild Pigs* (The Thirteen Moons series #7, picture book illustrated by Peter Parnall)
- 1968 *The Moon of the Mountain Lions* (The Thirteen Moons series #8, picture book illustrated by Winifred Lubell)
- 1968 *Coyote in Manhattan* (illustrated by John Kaufmann)
- 1969 *The Moon of the Chickarees* (The Thirteen Moons series #4, picture book illustrated by Don Rodell)
- 1969 *The Moon of the Deer* (The Thirteen Moons series #9, picture book illustrated by Jean Zallinger)
- 1969 *The Moon of the Alligators* (The Thirteen Moons series #10, picture book illustrated by Adrina Zanazanian)
- 1969 *The Moon of the Gray Wolves* (The Thirteen Moons series #11, picture book illustrated by Lorence Bjorklund)

- 1969 *The Moon of the Winter Bird* (The Thirteen Moons series #12, picture book illustrated by Kazue Mizumura)
- 1969 *The Moon of the Moles* (The Thirteen Moons series #13, picture book illustrated by Robert Levering)
- 1969 *New York in Maps* (listed as Toy Lasker and Jean George)
- 1970 *Beastly Inventions: A Surprising Investigation Into Just How Smart Animals Really Are* (illustrated by George)
- 1971 *Who Really Killed Cock Robin?* (Ecological Mystery #1)
- 1971 *All Upon a Stone* (picture book illustrated by Don Bolognese)
- 1972 *Julie of the Wolves* (Julie series #1, illustrated by John Schoenherr and Julek Heller in 1976) (ISBN 0-06-440058-1)
- 1972 *Everglades Wildguide* (Official National Park Handbook #143, illustrated by Betty Fraser) (ISBN 0-06-446194-7)
- 1974 *All Upon a Sidewalk* (picture book illustrated by Don Bolognese)
- 1975 *Hook a Fish, Catch a Mountain*
- 1976 *Going to the Sun*
- 1978 *The Wentletrap Trap* (picture book illustrated by Symeon Shimin)
- 1978 *The Wounded Wolf* (picture book illustrated by John Schoenherr)
- 1978 *The American Walk Book*
- 1979 *River Rats, Inc.*
- 1980 *The Cry of the Crow* (ISBN 0-06-440131-6)
- 1982 *Journey Inward* (autobiography)
- 1982 *The Grizzly Bear With the Golden Ears* (picture book illustrated by Tom Catania) (ISBN 0-06-021966-1)
- 1982 *The Wild, Wild Cookbook* (illustrated by Walter Kessell)
- 1983 *One Day in the Desert* (One Day series #1)
- 1983 *The Talking Earth*
- 1984 *One Day in the Alpine Tundra* (One Day series #2)
- 1985 *How to Talk to Your Animals*
- 1986 *One Day in the Prairie* (One Day series #3)
- 1986 *How to Talk to Your Cat* (chapter book, originally included in 1985's *How to Talk to Your Animals*, illustrated by George)

- 1986 *How to Talk to Your Dog* (chapter book, originally included in 1985's *How to Talk to Your Animals*, illustrated by George)
- 1987 *Water Sky* (illustrated by George)
- 1988 *One Day in the Woods* (One Day series #4)
- 1989 *Shark Beneath the Reef*
- 1990 *One Day in the Tropical Rainforest* (One Day series #5)
- 1990 *On the Far Side of the Mountain* (Mountain series #2, illustrated by George) (ISBN 0-14-131241-6)
- 1990 *The Big Book for Peace* (illustrated by Ted Rand)
- 1991 *The Moon of the Mountain Lions* (The Thirteen Moons #8, new edition of picture book illustrated by Ron Parker)
- 1991 *The Moon of the Alligators* (The Thirteen Moons #10, new edition of picture book illustrated by Michael Rothman)
- 1991 *The Moon of the Gray Wolves* (The Thirteen Moons #11, new edition of picture book illustrated by Sal Catalano)
- 1992 *The Missing 'Gator of Gumbo Limbo* (Ecological Mystery #2)
- 1992 *The Moon of the Salamanders* (The Thirteen Moons #3, new edition of picture book illustrated by Marlene Hill Werner)
- 1992 *The Moon of the Chickarees (The Thirteen Moons #4, new edition of picture book illustrated by Don Rodell)*
- 1992 *The Moon of the Fox Pups* (The Thirteen Moons #6, new edition of picture book illustrated by Norman Adams)
- 1992 *The Moon of the Wild Pigs* (The Thirteen Moons #7, new edition of picture book illustrated by Paul Mirocha)
- 1992 *The Moon of the Deer* (The Thirteen Moons #9, new edition of picture book illustrated by Sal Catalano)
- 1992 *The Moon of the Winter Bird* (The Thirteen Moons #12, new edition of picture book illustrated by Vincent Nasta)
- 1992 *The Moon of the Moles* (The Thirteen Moons #13, new edition of picture book illustrated by Michael Rothman)
- 1993 *The Fire Bug Connection* (Ecological Mystery #3) (ISBN 0-06-440474-9)
- 1993 *The First Thanksgiving* (picture book illustrated by Thomas Locker) (ISBN 0-698-11392-6)
- 1993 *The Big Book for Our Planet* (co-editor and contributor)
- 1993 *Dear Rebecca, Winter is Here* (picture book illustrated by Loretta Krupinski) (ISBN 0-06-443427-3)

- 1993 *The Moon of the Owls* (The Thirteen Moons #1, new edition of picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 1993 *The Moon of the Bears* (The Thirteen Moons #2, new edition of picture book illustrated by Ron Parker)
- 1993 *The Moon of the Monarch Butterflies* (The Thirteen Moons #5, new edition of picture book illustrated by Kam Mak)
- 1994 *Julie* (Julie series #2) (ISBN 0-06-440573-7)
- 1994 *Animals Who Have Won Our Hearts* (illustrated by Christine Herman Merrill)
- 1995 *Everglades* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor) (ISBN 0-06-446194-7)
- 1995 *There's an Owl in the Shower*
- 1995 *Acorn Pancakes, Dandelion Salad and 38 Other Wild Recipes* (abridgement of 1982's *The Wild, Wild Cookbook*, illustrated by Paul Mirocha)
- 1995 *To Climb a Waterfall* (picture book illustrated by Thomas Locker)
- 1996 *The Tarantula in My Purse and 172 Other Wild Pets* (ISBN 0-06-446201-3)
- 1996 *The Case of the Missing Cutthroats, An Ecological Mystery #4* (reissue of 1975's "Hook a Fish, Catch a Mountain")
- 1997 *Julie's Wolf Pack* (Julie series #3) (ISBN 0-06-027406-9)
- 1997 *Look to the North, A Wolf Pup Diary* (picture book illustrated by Lucia Washburn) (ISBN 0-06-023641-8)
- 1997 *Arctic Son* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 1998 *Dear Katie, the Volcano is a Girl* (picture book illustrated by Daniel Powers) (ISBN 0-7868-0314-2)
- 1998 *Giraffe Trouble* (picture book illustrated by Anna Vojtech) (ISBN 0-7868-5066-3)
- 1998 *Elephant Walk* (picture book illustrated by Anna Vojtech)
- 1998 *Gorilla Gang* (picture book illustrated by Stacey Schuett)
- 1998 *Rhino Romp* (picture book illustrated by Stacey Schuett)
- 1999 *Frightful's Mountain* (Mountain series #3, illustrated by George) (ISBN 0-525-46166-3)
- 1999 *Morning, Noon, and Night* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 1999 *Incredible Animal Adventures* (reissue of 1994's *Animals Who Have Won Our Hearts*, illustrated by Donna Diamond)
- 1999 *Snow Bear* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 2000 *How to Talk to Your Cat* (picture book illustrated by Paul Meisel, abridged from 1986's chapter book of same title)

- 2000 *How to Talk to Your Dog* (picture book illustrated by Paul Meisel, abridged from 1986's chapter book of same title)
- 2001 *Nutik, the Wolf Pup* (Julie series #4, picture book illustrated by Ted Rand) ISBN 0-06-028164-2)
- 2001 *Nutik and Amaroq Play Ball* (Julie series #5, picture book illustrated by Ted Rand) (ISBN 0-06-028166-9)
- 2001 *Autumn Moon* (Seasons of the Moon #1, compilation of The Thirteen Moons books #9, 10, and 11)
- 2001 *Winter Moon* (Seasons of the Moon #2, compilation of The Thirteen Moons books #12, 13, 1, and 2)
- 2002 *Cliff Hanger* (Outdoor Adventures series #1, picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor) (ISBN 0-06-000260-3)
- 2002 *Frightful's Daughter* (Mountain series #4, picture book illustrated by Daniel San Souci)
- 2002 *Tree Castle Island* (illustrated by George)
- 2002 *Spring Moon* (Seasons of the Moon #3, compilation of The Thirteen Moons books #3, 4, and 5)
- 2002 *Summer Moon* (Seasons of the Moon #4, compilation of The Thirteen Moons books #6, 7, and 8)
- 2003 *Fire Storm* (Outdoors Adventures series #2, picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor) (ISBN 0-06-000263-8)
- 2004 *Snowboard Twist* (Outdoors Adventures series #3, picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 2004 *Charlie's Raven*
- 2006 *Luck, the Story of a Sandhill Crane* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 2007 *Frightful's Daughter Meets the Baron Weasel* (Mountain series #5, picture book illustrated by Daniel San Souci)
- 2008 *Goose and Duck* (picture book illustrated by Priscilla Lamont)
- 2008 *The Wolves are Back* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 2009 *The Cats of Roxville Station* (illustrated by Tom Pohrt)
- 2009 *Pocket Guide to the Outdoors* (Dutton Children's Books), with Twig C. George, John C. George, and T. Luke George; cover says "Based on *My Side of the Mountain*"[11]
- 2009 *The Last Polar Bear* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 2009 *The Buffalo Are Back* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 2010 *The Eagles Are Back* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)
- 2010 *A Special Gift for Grammy* (picture book illustrated by Steve Johnson)
- 2014 *Ice Whale*
- 2014 *Galapagos George* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)

- 2018 *Shadow: The Cougar of Flat Creek* (picture book illustrated by John D. Dawson) - available via Jean's website
- 2021 *Crowbar: The Smartest Bird in the World* (picture book illustrated by Wendell Minor)

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10. "Julie von den Wölfen" (https://www.jugendliteratur.org/buch/julie-von-den-woelfen-1188-9783794107025/) . *Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur e.V.* Retrieved 11 February 2020.
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External links

- Official website (http://www.jeancraigheadgeorge.com/) – "Jean's website will continue to be updated. [...] Check back ... new works from Jean are forthcoming!" (retrieved 2015-10-30)
- Jean Craighead George (https://lccn.loc.gov/n80010436) at Library of Congress, with 137 library catalog records
- Biography (http://www.pabook.libraries.psu.edu/LitMap/bios/CraigheadGeorge_Jean.html) at Pennsylvania State University Center for the Book
- Biography (https://web.archive.org/web/20070625154710/http://www.edupaperback.org/showauth.cfm?authid=29) at Educational Paperback Association
- 2007 radio interview (https://web.archive.org/web/20080229001409/http://www.childrensbookradio.com/childrensbookradiopodcast22.mp3) (audio recording) at ChildrensBookRadio.com
- Works by Jean Craighead George (https://librivox.org/author/12809) at LibriVox (public domain audiobooks)